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DIANA APCAR'S SEARCH FOR AN ARMENIAN PROTECTORATE: HOPE AND DISAPPOINTMENT

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This article studies Diana Agabeg Apar's (1859-1937) perspective regarding the proposed American mandate over genocide-ravaged Armenia. It touches on aspects of historical empathy that are important in assessing the true nature of historical events. Through examining Diana Apar's correspondence with different individuals such as David Starr Jordan, Thomas J. Edmonds, Charles Albert Gobat as well as her articles related to this topic, this article aims to reveal the attitudes, opinions and mindset of this Armenian historical figure regarding the mandate issue.

Keywords: Armenian Genocide, American mandate, protectorate for Armenia, Paris Peace Conference, League of Nations, historical empathy.

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Introduction

Diana Apcar (1859-1937) was an Indian-raised Armenian and a descendant of Jugha¹ Armenians, who lived in Japan from 1890 until the end of her life. She played an important role as an activist for her people through her writing endeavors, which began in 1909, and in her later humanitarian work for many Armenian refugees, as well as for some Assyrian and Greek refugees who reached Japan between 1915 and 1930.

Diana was passionate about anything connected to the welfare of the Armenian people and did her utmost to contribute towards Armenia obtaining peace. As a prolific writer she was constantly writing books, articles, letters and stories aimed at promoting her cause. She published more than one hundred articles in various Armenian, American, Japanese and European newspapers and magazines, especially in those supporting the Armenian Question. There are probably dozens more of these articles still waiting to be discovered in Japanese, American and European archives. Most of her writing was done in English. Her main tool, her pen, was to give her people a voice, to relieve the oppression of the Ottoman Armenians and to gain support for her country from the Western Powers, especially the United States of America.

The international peace movement had been reaching the peak of its influence leading up to WWI and Diana had been actively trying to bring the Armenian Question to the attention of various peace conferences. Her view was that there could not be peace in Europe until smaller nations (within larger empires) had their heritage and freedom restored.² In other words, Diana supported self-determination for small countries striving for independence. Diana's greatest hope was to see smaller nations living in a peaceful world. The geo-political situation just after WWI was such that, in order to create peace in Armenia, a protecting country was needed. Diana was sure that if Armenia did not have a major country supporting it, Ottoman Armenians would not be safe and their survival was unlikely. Consequently, her belief was that procuring an American mandate for Armenia meant guaranteed peace of her countrymen.

This paper adopts a historical empathetic perspective.³ In the area of historical research, there is a tendency not to focus on the beliefs, attitudes and emotions of those individuals who were tied to historical events. This is an opinion shared by several historical researchers. In the words of Andrew J. Huebner *"As historians, we write about the most dramatic and poignant human experiences, yet too often we drain those subjects of emotion. Our admirable quest for detachment, our devotion to provable assertions, our reliance on often*

1 Jugha was an Armenian town in Nakhichevan, an exclave of the present-day Republic of Azerbaijan. About the history of Jugha see Sebouh David Aslanian, *From the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean: The Global Trade Networks of Armenian Merchants from New Julfa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 23-43.

2 D.A.A., "Correspondence: The Outlook for Turkey," *The Japan Advertiser* (Tokyo), October 3, 1911. Before 1911, Diana signed her articles as "Diana Apcar" or "Diana A. Apcar". Most of her 1911 articles are signed as "D. A. A." Starting from 1912, her articles were signed with her full name "Diana Agabeg Apcar."

3 "Historical empathy involves understanding how people from the past thought, felt, made decisions, acted, and faced consequences within a specific historical and social context." See Jason Endacott, Sarah Brooks, "An Updated Theoretical and Practical Model for Promoting Historical Empathy," *Social Studies Research and Practice* 8, no. 1 (2013): 41, at http://www.socstrpr.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/MS_06482_no3.pdf, accessed 14.09.2020.

dry archival sources, perhaps even our desire to be taken seriously in the academy — all inhibit more evocative writing.”⁴

He then suggests cultivating empathy and sympathy “as a way of truly excavating the character of the past.”⁵

In a similar vein Hallie Rubenhold writes that, “Too much emotional detachment from the people and events of the past presents a problem for wider society. The mistaken but prevalent concept that history is something distant, that it has no bearing on the present, is a dangerous one.”⁶

According to Katherine Jewell, in order to enhance the critical thinking of students of history, it is important for historians to allow the scholarly and the personal to meet.⁷ Jewell feels that historians have a responsibility to apply not only their skepticism and their skills, but also their ability to imagine, to enter into the worldview of someone else, and to do so with understanding and compassion. Subsequently this paper will try to show Diana Aparcar's hope and disappointment regarding the issue of the proposed American mandate. As will be discussed below, Diana was knowledgeable of and deeply invested in every aspect of Armenia's welfare and the proposed mandate. Consequently, an analysis of her mindset and reactions to the event will be highly instructive in providing a historical empathetic lens to experiencing what was a key turning point in Armenian history.

The article's research objective is to flesh out the specifics of Diana's story based on newly uncovered archival documents. This article serves the dual purpose of detailing a particular chapter from Diana's life, while also adding a new perspective to an important chapter in Armenian history: the question of an American mandate over Armenia. This will be accomplished by examining Diana's correspondence with certain individuals such as American peace activist and first president of Stanford University David Starr Jordan, the director of civil affairs of the American Red Cross in eastern Siberia, Thomas J. Edmonds and finally the honorary secretary of the Permanent International Peace Bureau (as well as a 1902 Nobel Peace Prize laureate) Charles Albert Gobat. Diana's articles on the topic of the mandate will also be analyzed

Diana's Favored Candidate for an Armenian Protectorate

Referring to the provinces in the Ottoman Empire inhabited by Armenians (mainly Erzeroum, Van, Bitlis, Sebastia, Diarbekir, Kharberd) in 1910, Diana stated that “The appointment of Christian governors over the provinces inhabited by them [Armenians] might ameliorate some of the evils.”⁸ Ever since the 1909 Adana massacres had galvanized her into taking up

4 Andrew J. Huebner, “Writing History with Emotion,” Organization of American Historians, at <https://www.oah.org/tah/issues/2014/august/writing-history-with-emotion/>, accessed 14.09.2020.

5 Huebner, “Writing History.”

6 “The concept that history is something distant is a dangerous one.” See Hallie Rubenhold, “Is Empathy an Aid or a Hindrance to Historians?” *History Today* 69, no. 5 (2019), at <https://www.historytoday.com/archive/head-head/empathy-aid-or-hindrance-historians>, accessed 14.09.2020.

7 Katherine R. Jewell, “Worlds Collide: The Boston Marathon Bombing, Historical Thinking and Empathy,” *The American Historian* 5 (2017): 15.

8 D. A. Aparcar, “The Turkish Constitution and Armenia,” *The New Armenia* (New York), May 1910.

writing as a form of protest and a call for justice, Diana had been primarily appealing for American support. This was due to Diana's belief that, unlike the European Powers, the US did not have any imperialistic goals.

The protectorate she preferred for Armenia had to be both non-Islamic and be implemented by a Christian country without any "sphere of influence" and imperialistic objectives. In 1910, when she appealed to the US Department of State for the American protection over Armenia, they replied to her with the US President's (Grover Cleveland, term of office: 1885-1889 and 1893-1897) answer⁹ that, as the US was not a signatory to the Treaty of Berlin it could not interfere with European politics.¹⁰ In her correspondence (1912-1913) with Gobat, in response to his question of "...who could undertake this protection without danger for the liberty of the people?"¹¹ Diana suggested that joint American and British protection with the appointment of Swiss governors would be ideal.¹² This suggestion was given despite her negative attitude towards British imperialistic policy. There is the question of why she preferred Swiss governors to British or American governors. In the case of an American governor, Diana did not think it was likely that after the American financial adviser (Morgan Shuster)¹³ to the Persian government had been exiled from Persia in 1911, that the US government would care to send American officials to the Near East. Regarding a British governor, she simply felt that would not be acceptable as it would lead to giving the British government too much authority. Diana thought that there could be no danger from the Swiss people, as they had been Armenians' best friends,¹⁴ and the Swiss governors would be the best. It can be speculated that due to Switzerland's approximately hundred-year-old (at the time) internationally recognized policy of neutrality¹⁵ and non-imperialistic goals, Diana felt that Armenia would be safe, governed by a citizen of such a country. Additionally, equal protection by US and Swiss governors would have kept the British "sphere of influence" at bay.¹⁶

Regarding European protection, Diana thought of it as a "chimera," that wouldn't be

9 According to Article 61 of 1878 Berlin treaty, the Ottoman Government undertakes to carry out the ameliorations and reforms in the provinces inhabited by the Armenians, and to guarantee their security against the Circassians and the Kurds. It will periodically inform about the taken steps to the Great Powers, who will supervise their application. In 1886 the American Senate and the House of Representatives passed a resolution concerning Article 61, calling upon the Powers to enforce the statement in the article which allow them to forcibly intervene in the case of Turkish cruelty, to protect Armenia. However, President Cleveland was reluctant to communicate the resolution to the Powers fearing his act would be seen as interference in European affairs. ("America and the Berlin Treaty. President Cleveland Hesitates," *The Age* (Melbourne), January 31, 1896.)

10 D. A. Apcar to D. S. Jordan, January 17, 1912 (must be 1913), Diana Agabeg Apcar (hereafter DAA) 1910-1924, David Starr Jordan Papers (hereafter DSJP) 1794-1950, Collection 240, Box 13, Folder 1-5, Hoover Institution Archives (hereafter: HIA), Stanford, CA. D. A. Apcar to Albert Gobat, January 12, 1913, International Peace Movements, International Peace Bureau (hereinafter: IPM/IPB) 275/6, UN Archives, Geneva.

11 A. Gobat to D. A. Apcar, December 20, 1912, IPM/IPB.

12 D. A. Apcar to Albert Gobat, January 12, 1913, IPM/IPB.

13 W. Morgan Shuster, *The Strangling of Persia* (New York: The Century Co., 1912).

14 "The United States does not want our country nor are we in any danger from the Swiss people, who have been in reality our best friends ...". D. A. Apcar to A. Gobat, January 12, 1913, IPM/IPB.

15 Lassa Oppenheim, *International Law: A Treatise. Vol. I. - Peace*, third edition, ed. by Ronald F. Roxburgh (London: Longmans, Green and Co, 1920), 176.

16 D. A. Apcar to A. Gobat, January 12, 1913, IPM/IPB.

realized.¹⁷ Consequently, the next candidate-country she suggested was Russia. However, Diana had a deep distrust of Russia which can be seen in the following statement by her: “*The Armenian Question would have found its solution years ago if we did not have, behind our country, the government of the Czar, which since 1881 has wanted an Armenia without Armenians.*”¹⁸

Despite this distrust, she started, in 1912, to consider the “*Russian occupation*” in a more favorable light, stating that “*Russian occupation of Armenia would have been the only door of escape out of the Turkish hell.*”¹⁹ Of course, she still had a dread of Russia’s “*sphere of influence,*” which was unavoidable due to Armenia’s geographical position. As Diana describes it, “*a geographical position [...] is a rock that cannot be hewn.*” She described Armenia’s location as “*...luckless geographical position at the mercy of three evils, — Turkish Reforms, to be controlled or superintended by ‘The Powers’; German Interests in Asia Minor; ...and Russian occupation of Armenia.*”²⁰

Because it was a requirement to escape from the “*Turkish hell,*” she considered Russian occupation to be a “*modified evil*” compared with the other two, calling it a “*stern necessity*” or an “*inexorable fate.*”²¹

Additionally, Diana had been appealing for America’s support for more than ten years. Aside from her articles on the subject, Diana had also published a poem, where she was calling for America’s help on behalf of Armenia. Below [Figure 1] is a copy of the poem that was published in at least six American newspaper in 1916.²²

17 D. A. Apcar to D. S. Jordan, August 29, 1913, IPM/IPB.

18 D. A. Apcar to D. S. Jordan, January 17, 1912 (must be 1913), DAA 1910-1924, DSJP 1794-1950, Collection 240, Box 13, Folder 1-5, HIA, Stanford, CA.

19 D. A. Apcar to D. S. Jordan, December 30, 1913, Ibid. D. A. Apcar “Correspondence: the Situation in Armenia and the case of the Armenians,” *The Far East*, Oct 4, 1913.

20 D. A. Apcar, “Correspondence: Russia and Armenia,” *The Far East* (Yokohama), January 24, 1914, 648, 658.

21 D. A. Apcar, “Russian Occupation of Armenia,” *Armenia* (New York), August, 1913, 8-9. D. A. Apcar to D. S. Jordan, December 30, 1913, DAA 1910-1924, DSJP 1794-1950, Collection 240, Box 13, Folder 1-5, HIA, Stanford, CA. *Armenia* was a semimonthly English magazine (editor Arshag D. Mahdesian) issued in Boston, later in New York between 1904-1929. In 1910s the name of the magazine changed from “*Armenia*” to “*The New Armenia*.”

22 D. A. Apcar, “America, Armenia Calls to Thee,” *Binghamton Press* (New York), July 11, 1916; “Table Talk: America, Armenia Calls to Thee,” *The Buffalo Commercial* (New York), July 13, 1916; “Armenian and Syrian Belief,” *The Kenosha Evening News* (Wisconsin), Oct 17, 1916; “America! Armenia Calls to Thee,” *The Hartford Daily Courant* (Connecticut), Oct 18, 1916, “Bryce Makes Appeal for the Armenians,” *Appleton Evening Crescent* (Wisconsin), Oct 21, 1916. “America! Armenia Calls to Thee”, *The Scranton Republican* (Pennsylvania), October 24, 1916.

Figure 1: Diana's Poem Calling for America's Help

America! Armenia Calls to Thee.

Between the mighty and one of strength bereft,
God stands for succour and for help ;
From East to West God rules.
Oh! Land of the West, where the people rule,
Perchance God bids thee haste to help
That Land of the East where horrors rule.
Oh! Land of the West ; Oh! land of the free,
America ! Armenia calls to thee.

Kaiser, and King, and Tsar : my children slain :
My rivers red with blood ;
My plains and hillsides desolate.
Oh! Land of the West, where the people rule,
God will, thy flag shall carry peace
To Land of the East where horrors rule.
Oh! Land of the West, Oh! land of the free,
America ! Armenia calls to thee.

DIANA AGABEG APCAR.

The poem is clearly a call for help from “The Land of the West, where people rule” to aid Armenians who reside in “Land of the East where horrors rule” and demonstrates Diana’s regard for the democratic West. In this poem it is clear that she desired and hoped that as a free country America would bring peace to Armenia.

Remembering the historical background of the unattained American mandate

In order to comprehend Diana's views better, it is necessary to look back at the historical development of the Armenian mandate.

In 1918 Eastern Armenia, also known as Russian Armenia, regained its independence after several centuries. The Paris Peace Conference (1919-1920) which was convened at the conclusion of WWI, was the location where the peace terms for the defeated powers of Germany, Austria, the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Ottoman Empire were set. A number of issues were discussed such as the creation of the League of Nations, mandated territories and other territorial problems. Petitions made by nations that had autonomy or had already become independent were also being heard at the conference. The Republic of Armenia (that had already declared its independence by that time) sent a delegation to the Peace Conference to urge Armenia's claim to six provinces in western or Ottoman Armenia, and that a connection to the Black Sea be granted to the republic. In addition to the delegation from the Armenian Republic, the Armenian National Delegation representing western Armenians petitioned for Cilicia to have a connection to the Mediterranean Sea, which was a larger claim in comparison to the demands of the eastern Armenians. Initially, there were disagreements between the two delegations; however, they eventually united and petitioned for Armenia to be expanded from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean, an area that had been viewed as a historical homeland of the Armenian people. Additionally, a mandate was needed to put a United Armenia back on its feet.²³

In 1920 Diana wrote: "*Cilicia has been called "the lungs of Armenia." Armenians know that the loss of Cilicia, with its outlet to the Mediterranean, means economic strangulation, and it also means weakening the self-defenses of the Armenian State.*"²⁴

Here we can see that Diana's views on the matter were in line with those of the Armenian National Delegation, which eventually reached agreement with the Armenian Republic Delegation, that Cilicia should be included in the Armenian State.²⁵

There were many factors that made these demands impossible to be realized. In the first place, half of the territory of Cilicia and western Armenia had been under French control since 1916 (the Sykes-Picot Agreement). Secondly, Ottoman Kurdish demands overlapped those of the Armenians. Finally, there were many other territorial issues such as the Ottoman Armenian territories being occupied by Russian troops. Consequently, there were many obstacles interfering with the Armenian claim. Furthermore, the Allies prioritized the treaty with Germany over the partitioning of the Ottoman Empire, which included dealing with

23 Samvel Poghosyan, «Փարիզի վեհաժողովի հայկական հուշագիրը և նրա հետագա նակատագիրը» [The Armenian Memorandum of the Paris Conference and its Further Fate"], *Hayots' ts'eghaspanut'yan patmut'yan ev patmagrutyan hartis'er* 6 (2002): 123-124.

24 D. A. Apcar, "Correspondence: The American Mandate for Armenia," *The Japan Gazette* (Yokohama), June 1, 1920.

25 Poghosyan, *The Armenian Memorandum*, 125.

the Armenian Question.²⁶ Thus the Armenian Question was left to be discussed in future conferences.

Under Article 22 of Part I of the Treaty of Versailles signed on June 28, 1919 by Germany and the Powers during the Paris Peace Conference, the mandate system was established. The mandate system dictated that, the nations that were under the Ottoman and German rule were to be put under the control and protection of more experienced and better geographically positioned countries and to develop the territories until they could become stable and self-sufficient. The mandate over Armenia, however, had not yet been decided.²⁷ A 1920 article from an American newspaper *Fort Wayne News and Sentinel* stated the following:

In the splitting up of Turkey various Allies took various slices, but no one took Armenia. It lacked the natural riches that made Syria and Mesopotamia, for instance, attractive. The mandate was offered to the League of Nations, but the League replied that it could not assume the task, because it had neither an army nor money with which to administer Armenia. The Allies then engaged in a search for someone [sic] who wished to put up the \$50,000,000 and supply the 40,000 men needed to put Armenia on its feet.²⁸

In another American newspaper article discussing American President Woodrow Wilson's request to Congress to accept the mandate over Armenia it was stated:

Provision for mandates is made in the peace treaty and it is set forth that such mandates shall be executed under the League of Nations, but since the United States is not a member, administration officials said if Congress decided that the United States should act for Armenia, the treaty provisions would be waived in this case.²⁹

Consequently the possibility of America taking on the mandate was being discussed, which gave Armenians hope. During the Paris Peace Conference, Diana wished that one day in the near future all Armenian refugees could return to their freed fatherland. She and those refugees who reached her were "anxiously watching developments at the Peace Conference."³⁰ From the time that the discussion over the mandate started in the US, Diana was filled with great hope, which can be seen in the following passages from her letters:

I am at last seeing the realization of my hopes and I think I can say that the whole Armenian nation has received this news with great joy and thankfulness; many like me have worked hard for this realization and everyone is thankful that at last

26 George A. Bournoutian, *A Concise History of the Armenian People: From Ancient Times to the Present* (Costa Mesa: Mazda Publishers, 2003), 300-302.

27 Oppenheim, *International Law*, 288n.

28 "Armenia First! America Last!" *The Fort Wayne News and Sentinel* (Indiana), June 7, 1920.

29 "President Sends Note Urging Action," *The Ogden Standard-Examiner* (Utah), May 25, 1920.

30 D. A. Aparcar to Thomas. J. Edmonds, 14 March, 1919, Folder 6-7, Box 165, Collection 482, ANRC, HIA, Stanford, CA.

Armenians can live on the soil of Armenia and enter into their own heritage.³¹

... I hope President Wilson will hold out for Armenia which must have an outlet to the Mediterranean and Mersine, [sic] which will be our port on the Mediterranean, is connected with Adana.³²

We are now sure of a free and independent Armenia which will comprise of what used to be Russian Armenia and the whole of what used to be Turkish Armenia including Cilicia with Mersine as the Mediterranean port, and we are hoping, believing, praying and expecting that the United States will become the Mandatory Power during the period of reorganization: all the Armenians wish it, but we do not know as yet what the American people are going to do because there has been no official declaration made as yet, but if the United States (America whom we all love) fails us, then England will become the Mandatory Power during the period of organization and reconstruction.³³

In August 1919, President Wilson dispatched a delegation led by a major general of the US Army, James G. Harbord, to investigate and report on America's interest and responsibility regarding the Middle East and to probe the possibility of the US assuming the mandate over Armenia. After 6 weeks of investigation, Harbord reported on the situation in the Middle East, Armenian history and the current political situation in Armenia with suggestions to rearrange it. At the end of the report, he concluded with the following statement and suggested 14 reasons for and 13 against accepting the mandate.

Accepting this difficult task without previously securing the assurance of conditions would be fatal to success. ... Every possible precaution against international complications should be taken in advance. In our opinion there should be specific pledges in terms of formal agreements with France and England and definite approval from Germany and Russia of the dispositions made of Turkey and Transcaucasia, and a pledge to respect them.³⁴

President Wilson presented the case of the American mandate over Armenia to the American Congress on May 24, 1920 saying:

I am conscious that I am urging upon the congress a very critical choice, but I make the suggestion in the confidence that I am speaking in the spirit and in accordance with the wishes of the greatest of the Christian peoples. The sympathy for Armenia

31 D. A. Apcar to Mr. Hall, March 20, 1919, Folder 6-7, Box 165, Collection 482, ANRC, HIA, Stanford, CA.
32 D. A. Apcar to Thomas J. Edmonds, May 28, 1919, Folder 6-7, Box 165, Collection 482, ANRC, HIA, Stanford, CA.

33 D. A. Apcar to Edmonds, August 11, 1919, Folder 6-7, Box 165, Collection 482, ANRC, HIA, Stanford, CA.

34 Maj. Gen. James G. Harbord, *Conditions in the Near East. Report of the American Military Mission to Armenia*, 66th Cong., 2d sess., S. Doc. 266, Washington Government Printing Office, 1920, 24-28, at <http://armenianhouse.org/harbord/conditions-near-east.htm>, accessed 21.06.2018.

among our people has sprung from untainted conscience, pure Christian faith, and the earnest desire to see Christian people succored in their time of suffering and lifted from their abject subjection and distress and enabled to stand upon their feet and take their place among the free nations in the world. Our recognition of the independence of Armenia will mean genuine liberty and assured happiness for her people if we fearlessly undertake the duties of guidance and assistance involved in the function of a mandatory.³⁵

However, Congress adopted a resolution, on May 29th, to decline an American mandate over Armenia. The reason for the decline was not clarified, but it was based on the above-mentioned report that “did not have a clear proposal.”³⁶

Diana and the American mandate

To comprehend Diana’s disappointment in having the mandate rejected, one must appreciate that the hope and tension invested in the decision of American Congress had been building up for years. Eleven years before the question of the American mandate over Armenia had even arisen (1909), when Diana started her appeal for America’s support, her ideas were not welcomed by the Armenian people, who thought Diana was “indulging in foolish fancies and in Chimera.”³⁷ Despite this setback, the hope that Diana held onto gave her the strength to “fight” for another 10 years. Again in 1916 she described how she could envision her country being wiped clear of her countrymen and thought that “the final decision of ‘Armenia emptied of Armenians’ lay in the hands of the God of Abel” and that “*President Wilson as the Chief Magistrate of a great neutral state and the representative of a great neutral nation, must go over the side of the God of Abel in order to work for a Stable Peace.*”³⁸

Thus, one can only imagine the immensity of her disappointment after fighting for so long while simultaneously dealing directly with the refugees whose hopes were added to her thoughts. In this time of disappointment, her only comfort was her faith and Diana declared that the only “power” that she would never be disappointed in was God. “*But God stands above all principalities, and powers and nations, therefore I who began this work of desiring American political interference in Armenia, now am hoping that God will take up the mandate, and there is no doubt that nothing would be better.*”³⁹

Diana continued writing, strongly arguing why Armenia needed the American mandate, even after it was rejected by the US Congress. On May 31, 1920, two days after the resolution was announced, Diana wrote an article which was published in *The Japan Gazette*. In it she praised President Wilson for his efforts and stated that he “has placed himself at the head of

35 “President Sends Note Urging Action,” *Ogden Standard-Examiner* (Utah), May 25, 1920.

36 Philip Marshall Brown, “The Mandate over Armenia,” *The American Journal of International Law* 13, no. 3, (1920): 396.

37 D. A. Apcar, “America and the Armenian Mandate,” *The Japan Advertiser* (Tokyo), June 23, 1920.

38 D. A. Apcar, “Correspondence - The Coming Peace,” *The Far East* (Yokohama), December 23, 1916.

39 Apcar, “The Coming Peace.”

the list of Armenia's friends." She furthermore expressed hope that American advocacy for the mandate might still develop into meaningful action. Her primary focus however was on the isolated nature of Armenia's position. She wrote: "*The Turk wishes to join his brothers (sons of the same father) the Tartars [sic], and thus create one big Turkish Empire from the Bosphorus to Turkestan. [...] Armenia stands as the barrier to the success of this Pan-Turanian scheme, and Armenia will continue so to stand if Christendom wishes.*" And so she posed a question: "*Is it right to let one small Christian nation be "the barrier of living flesh" for ever and ever and to stand fighting as the lone outpost of Christianity, absolutely unaided, for all time?*"⁴⁰

It was completely beyond Diana's imagination that fellow Christian countries and even non-religious humanitarians could ignore the injustice perpetrated against her people. Diana, who longed for America's help for years, continued writing with strength of purpose even after the US Senate made the resolution to decline the mandate.

With regards to the declaration made by the Senate stating: "*The acceptance of such a Mandate would throw the US into the very maelstrom of European quarrels,*"⁴¹ Diana wrote, "*European intrigues created the "maelstrom" in Armenia, but those who advocate the American Mandate know that when the United States enters into the arena, European intrigues will withdraw from the scene, and then the 'maelstrom' will no longer be dangerous.*"⁴²

She stated three essential needs, critical for the New Armenia: first – free and easy access to the sea, essential to the prosperity and security of the new Armenian state; second – a political guarantee secured by the protection of the League of Nations so that it could be protected from a union between Turk and Tatar (present day Azerbaijanis) and third – financial aid that would be obtainable from the United States, which "[...] will stabilise the new Armenian state and thereby stabilise the Peace of the Near East."⁴³

What follows are a response to Diana's strongly written articles on this matter. Five articles have been found that reveal the argument between Betty Graeme,⁴⁴ who criticized Diana and a Japanese Methodist Episcopal Church missionary Arthur D. Berry,⁴⁵ who supported Armenia and Diana herself.

In response to Diana's above-mentioned article in *The Japan Gazette*, Graeme indirectly called Diana an "amateur world fixer" and continued by writing that "... *Statements like*

40 D. A. Apcar, "Correspondence: The American Mandate for Armenia," *The Japan Gazette* (Yokohama), June 1, 1920.

41 D. A. Apcar, "Readers in Council: America and the Armenian Mandate," *The Japan Advertiser* (Tokyo), June 19, 1920.

42 Apcar, "America and the Armenian Mandate."

43 D. A. Apcar, "Armenia's Needs," *Japan Times and Mail* (Tokyo), November 5, 1920.

44 Elizabeth Boschke, the so-called Betty Graeme was famous in the city of Spokane in Washington state. She was active as a journalist for the daily newspaper *The Spokesman-Review* with "Betty Graeme" pen name. It seems like she was also corresponding with Oriental newspapers. See *Sunday Oregonian* (Oregon), October 22, 1916.

45 *The Directory & Chronicle for China, Japan, Corea, Indo-China, Straits Settlements, Malay States, Siam, Netherlands India, Borneo, the Philippines, &c: With which are Incorporated "The China Directory" and "The Hongkong List for the Far East"* (Hongkong: The Hongkong Daily Press office, 1910), 693.

that of Diana Agabeg Apcar show commendable humanitarianism but small knowledge of world politics.”⁴⁶ In response to Graeme’s critical comments saying that “world fixers” like Diana “somewhat officiously, point out their duty to them [Americans] and, all unsolicited, attempt to direct the foreign policy of their country,”⁴⁷ Diana stated that

Discussing [a] subject is not officiously pointing out their duty to Americans, neither attempting to direct the foreign policy of their country, and no one can deny that every subject needs to be discussed before a solution can be reached. [...] and in asking for an American Mandate we did not dictate to the American nation the foreign policy of their country, but we only asked them to stand as our friend. We asked for various reasons, but asking is not dictating.⁴⁸

In his article Arthur Berry hoped that the Japanese and other non-American readers would not think that Betty Graeme represents the attitude of all Americans toward the mandate for Armenia and in support of Diana’s call he continued: “*There are many Americans who feel that the acceptance of the Armenian mandate is the plain international duty and privilege of America. We do not feel so because “amateur world fixers of other nationalities” tell us so. Our own national conscience, our own American idealism, our own humanitarianism make us feel that the Armenian mandate is a big world task that America ought to undertake.*”⁴⁹

Diana’s articles about the American mandate over Armenia continued to be a discussion topic until 1922. An American missionary residing in Tokyo, Rev. Charles F. Sweet,⁵⁰ referring to America’s rejection of the mandate wrote: “*The people of the United States might have saved Armenia, had we been willing to accept a mandate for the Armenian portion of the Turkish Empire. The mandate was offered us, and we refused to accept its obligations and the troubles which acceptance would have involved. We feared foreign entanglements.*”⁵¹

Referring to Diana he stated:

The letters of Mrs. Apcar which from time to time have appeared in your columns reveal in their burning intensity how deep is her sense of the misfortunes and the wrongs of her race. Not, exactly, however as narrating the dreadful story — she seems to take for granted that the whole world knows it well enough — but as implying both her suffering and her despair. The agony of an outraged ancient people that has outlived its hope echoes in her lines. Who can read them without sympathy, who can even think of it all without deep stirrings of the heart?⁵²

46 Betty Graeme, “Americans and the Armenian Mandate,” *The Japan Advertiser* (Tokyo), June 22, 1920.

47 Graeme, “Americans and the Armenian Mandate.”

48 D. A. Apcar, “America and the Armenian Mandate,” *Japan Advertiser* (Tokyo), June 23, 1920.

49 Arthur D. Berry, “Readers in Council: Another American Viewpoint,” *Japan Advertiser* (Tokyo), June 23, 1920.

50 Robert Cornell Armstrong (ed.), *The Christian Movement in Japan Korea and Formosa: A Year Book of Christian Work: Nineteenth Annual Issue*, (Japan: Federation of Cristian Missions, 1921), 94, 101, 131.

51 Charles F. Sweet, “Readers in Council: The Wrongs of Armenia,” *Japan Advertiser* (Tokyo), August 1, 1922.

52 Sweet, “The Wrongs of Armenia.”

One can only imagine Diana's despair and disappointment. In a letter to President Wilson on the eve of the decision by the US Congress, she seemed to want to underline the seriousness of what was at stake with the decision. In this letter Diana accuses the French of being behind the 1920 Turkish attack on the Republic of Armenia by Turkish nationalists. She furthermore stated that, "Every Turkish massacre of Armenians has invariably had some powerful European government or governments behind it."⁵³ The entire letter alluded to the fact that without sufficient protection, Armenia would continue to suffer at the hands of European political intrigue.

Her disappointment can also be read in two of her letters sent to Jordan after a long period of no correspondence: "*It is a long time since we corresponded, and the reason has been that all the heart has been taken out of me: these three and a half years since the armistice have been bitter indeed.*"⁵⁴

It can be assumed that the rejection of the mandate, coupled with the new massacres in Cilicia were indeed devastating for Diana. Especially considering the fact that she had repatriated about 80-100 Armenians from Japan in 1919.⁵⁵ The repatriation of those Armenians to Port Said was a source of bitter regret to Diana.⁵⁶ After 1920 even when the situation in Cilicia was deteriorating and despite the fact that America refused to help Armenia by accepting the mandate, Diana was still a little hopeful that America would do something.⁵⁷ Naturally, the mandate was important for Armenia to become a stable state, but it was also essential and urgent for the people's safety, as there was the constant danger of more massacres.

Despite everything, Diana's faith was so strong that she trusted that God would be "taking the mandate over Armenia," which would place Armenia in the most trustworthy hands of all. Diana was not a political thinker, but her strong will to help her own people and country to escape the "hell" in which they were drowning, made her one of the most active female political activists of her time, whose approach to politics was not based on calculation and compromise but on a desperate hope for the welfare of her people.

Epilogue

By examining Diana's correspondence with different people and her articles and books, the author has endeavoured to reveal a portion of Diana's enormous and untiring dedication to her people and her country. This can be seen in the high hopes she had for finding a

53 D. A. Apcar to Woodrow Wilson, December 20, 1920. Records of the Department of State Relating to Internal Affairs of Armenia, 1910-1929, of United States. National Archives and Records Administration, Atlanta, GA, http://search.alexanderstreet.com/preview/work/bibliographic_entity%7Cbibliographic_details%7C2725621, accessed 13.11.2018.

54 D. A. Apcar to D. S. Jordan, February 13, 1922, Folder 1-5, Box 13, Collection 240, DAA 1910-1924, DSJP 1794-1950, HIA, Stanford, CA.

55 See Meline Mesropyan, 「ディアナ・アプカーと来日アルメニア人難民」 [Diana Apcar and the Armenian Refugees in Japan], PhD thesis, 174-175, <http://hdl.handle.net/10097/00125709>.

56 D. A. Apcar to Alfred Davies, Folder 6-7, Box 165, Collection 482, ANRC, HIA, Stanford, CA.

57 D. A. Apcar to D. S. Jordan, February 13, 1922, Folder 1-5, Box 13, Collection 240, DAA 1910-1924, DSJP 1794-1950, HIA, Stanford, CA.

guardian-country for Armenia and the despair and disappointment during the last stage of her 10-year effort.

What Diana's hope and disappointment on the loss of an American mandate revealed was how much of Armenia's welfare was dependent on the support of a powerful state and how close Armenia came to actually achieving this through the vocal support of President Wilson and the democratic processes of the US Congress. Diana's hope and disappointment show us a state in need of powerful allies which did not have sufficient geopolitical incentives to intervene. Indeed, the US's great unconditional humanitarian and diplomatic assistance to the Armenian refugees after WWI and President Wilson's compassionate approach seemed to heighten Diana's hope and faith in its realization. She was seeing America as a potential protecting country for Armenia without any designs on increasing their "sphere of influence." In fact, Armenia's not being a focus of America's geopolitical interests might have been the very reason America did not take the mandate.

The Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust are the most compared genocides of the 20th century by various researchers.⁵⁸ Given the topic of this paper it is hard to avoid parallels with the support the state of Israel received from the US after WWII. Notwithstanding the many geopolitical differences between the two circumstances as well as between Armenia and Israel themselves, there are striking similarities. Both of these ancient nations had been living without their own states for centuries, creating vast diasporas all around the world. Both of these nations were granted internationally recognized small states after world wars hemmed in by hostile Muslim neighbors and both states belong to a cultural heritage that has endured genocide. The similarities highlight the necessity of a powerful ally that was essential for their survival and development. However, despite the fact that, unlike Israel, Armenia's direct neighbor was the Genocide perpetrator thus increasing the danger to the Armenian state, the re-formed state in the Caucasus, surrounded by enemies, was abandoned first by the European Powers that had no political interests in Armenia and then by the US, which did not consider Armenia as being in its "sphere of influence." It is also unnecessary to mention the complete absence of reparations for the Armenian genocide, loss of homeland territories, an unpunished Turkish government and the constant denial of the Armenian genocide until the present day. It is also obvious that unlike with Armenia, the Western Powers, especially the US had geopolitical interests in Israel. Given these parallels it is hard not to wonder what could have been, had the American mandate over Armenia been approved. As harsh as it sounds, no matter how compassionate a state or state leader may wish to be, fundamental aspects of geopolitics are spheres of influence and political interests. When Armenia's situation is viewed in this light, Diana's hopes, despite being well-reasoned could also be called naive.

Ultimately, what we can see in Diana's hope and disappointment is the realization that

⁵⁸ See, for example, Robert Melson, *Revolution and Genocide: on the Origins of the Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust* (Chicago : University of Chicago Press, 1996); Yair Auron, *The Banality of Indifference: Zionism and the Armenian genocide*, trans. by Maggie Bar-Tura (New York: Routledge, 2017); Dlpak Jabar Ali Dawood, "The Aftermath of the Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust: A Comparative Study," *Journal of University of Garmian* 6, no. 3 (2019), at http://jgu.garmian.edu.krd/article_99472_9907367600af94e744a71585900c1037.pdf, accessed 02.01.2021.

the “rock” of Armenia’s geographical position truly could not be hewn. 100 years have passed but Armenia is still hemmed in by hostility. As Diana put it, Armenia’s “inexorable fate” is that the only ally that it can turn to is Russia with its own geopolitical interests.